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The Merits of CHRIST, exemplary.

OR, AN

INTERPRETATION

OF

ST. PETER'S ACCOUNT

Bible - New Testament
OF

CHRIST'S *bearing our Sins in his own*
Body on the Tree.

OFFERED

To the Consideration of the PUBLIC.

If the World hate you, ye know that it hated me your Chief.

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

It is enough for the Disciple, that he be as his Master.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. HENDERSON, under the *Royal-Exchange.*

M DCC LXI.

The Miracles of Christ, explanatory.

OF AN

INTERPRETATION

OF

St. Peter's ACCOUNT

OF

Christ's bearing our sins in his own

Body on the Tree.



To the Correspondence of the Publisher.

If the Words are not in this sense, it is not in the Bible.

It is not the same as the word in the Bible.

It is enough for the English, but it is not in the Bible.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. Hannemann, under the Royal Exchange.

MDCCLXX.

St. Peter's Sense of Christ's Merits.

BY the sacred laws of charity, no one can be supposed to think or speak contemptuously, or without a becoming veneration of the man Christ Jesus, who believes him to be that distinguished messenger whom God had promised to Adam and to Abraham; and by whom he actually benefits or blesses all nations. It would argue the greatest inattention, to suppose him to be the final judge, and yet be, at the same time, wilfully wanting in love and reverence to his person, character, and office. When therefore we essay to speak or write on his MERITS, and attempt to give an apostolic sense of them, none should presume to censure our freedom, or rashly sit in judgment upon the interpretation we give of the New Testament doctrine, whilst we avow a venerable idea of Jesus, as the one Lord. On the contrary, we expect of our readers a serious and candid examination: and if any are capable of it, a rational,

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and argumentative confutation. Truth is all our aim ; and we are ready to attend and submit to evidence.

The bulk of the professing world, called, *christian*, has paid a kind of first honours to *St. Peter*, and has been forward enough to assert and maintain his priority in the apostolic college : a consideration, which led me to conclude, that his account of the nature and degree of Christ's *merits*, would be more generally allowed to have an indisputable authority. I shall, accordingly, fix on a paragraph in his first Epist. chap. 2d from the 19th verse to the end, for the illustration.—In the previous context, he has been speaking of the superior advantage of the Gospel system ; and has urged the grace of it, as a motive to patience and resolution under persecution. He has likewise shewn, that from the foundation of the world, God intended, the promised *Messiah* should be distinguished by his sufferings ; and that notwithstanding the contempt and insult poured upon him, by men who made the highest pretences to be the builders of the church of God ; yet he was precious, or an honour ^a to all that believe in his divine mission,

^a ἡ τιμή.

mission, whatever may be the sufferings to which the profession does expose them. After this he recommends to the christians, a regular conversation, such as should be meet, comely, honest, or good, ^b among the Gentiles, notwithstanding the reproach and ill-usage, their infidelity, ignorance, prejudice and vice would occasion. Christians must submit to civil government—and though the civil magistrate should treat them with an unrighteous severity, they, by well-doing, should endeavour to *silence the ignorance of foolish men*. And whilst they maintained their religious liberty, no anger or malice might discover itself; because of the hand of persecution. Even *servants* must remain obedient and faithful to the most froward and perverse *masters*, whose property they were.

The reason of such a divine temper and conduct, is given in these words, *for this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully*.—It is comely, *grateful*, ^c or acceptable in the sight of God, that a man's reverence of God and truth is such, as will enable him to endure
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^b χαλδρ. ^c χαρις.

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any occasion of grief or anguish, any painful treatment, because of an adherence to truth, or because of his piety and virtue.—The patience and meekness, that has no wrathful, revengeful commotions, but the generous pity and compassion towards the hand of violence and injury, in these religious departments, must be *acceptable* to God—whereas, there is, there can be no merit or glory in being patient, when buffeted for a faulty and criminal conduct.

To enforce the virtuous and divine attainment, which is the zenith of human rectitude, the illustrious example of Christ is introduced; *for even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. Who did no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth. Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatned not; but gave up, or yeilded to him who judgeth righteously.* His submission was entire and unreserved; persuaded of the wisdom, equity, and righteousness of the divine permissions, in the whole of his trial.

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His merit lay in this humble, meek, patient, and resigned spirit and behaviour, under his sufferings. No way inclined to recriminate on the insult and injury : but so far from it, whilst hanging on a cross, his prayer to God, is, *father forgive them, they know not what they do.* Superlatively concerned is he, about their recovery to reason and rectitude. Not a single desire of the misery or wretchedness, of the most bitter and cruel of his enemies, whose passions are thus outrageously enflamed, by reason of ignorance, vice, and stupidity.

We cannot be surpris'd at *St. Peter's* adding, *who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripe ye were healed.*

It seems almost impossible to mistake the sense of this description.—How did he *bear sin in his own body?* not by becoming, in fact, a sinner ; for he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Not by being justly reckoned or imputed a sinner : for this was equally impossible, in the eye of God. Though in the eye of his murderers he was so imputed : and accordingly they condemned and crucified him,

him, as if he had really been a capital criminal.—But this surely is not the precise sense of *his own self bearing our sins in his own body on the tree*; for it does more consistently mean, the *example* he has left us, of patiently bearing the most unjust and cruel usage in his own body, on the tree. If the reasoning has any connexion, or the argument any force, the *bearing of our sins*, will import, not only the patience, but the divine compassion and pity with which he bore them; thus giving us an *example that we should follow his steps*, in whatever instances we are called to suffer for well-doing, or for righteousness sake.—An argument fully in point, as addressed to the first christians.

And this interpretation is farther confirmed, by the effect it should have upon them, *viz. that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness*.—The malignity of sin is apparent in the sufferings and death of Christ; and if once duly considered and explored, will give the mind an utter abhorrence of all iniquity. And no sooner has the example had a suitable influence and effect upon us, than *we live unto righteousness*.

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Let the attainment be critically examined and faithfully applied, and the reasoning will be satisfactorily clear, full, and convincing: For, if I can be once able to bear any ill-usage with patience, and with a meekness which is animated by pity and compassion, even though *mal-treated*, by bigots and infidels, because of the most rational, regular, and beneficent behaviour towards others; what kind of degree either of malevolence, injustice, or indecency can I be supposed guilty of, in any of the civil and social intercourses and connexions I have with mankind? Nor is it possible I should be otherwise than devoted to God, in the most sublime and exalted sense of piety, if I am able to acknowledge him wise, equitable and good, in the severely bitter, painful, and trying allotments of his providence? The example and the imitation of it, are, what thus appear to give the most finished exhibitions of the rectifying power and efficacy of *truth*, upon the life and soul of man.

In this manner it certainly is, *that by his*
'Stripe we are healed. And one might be
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* *Nemo mihi videtur pluris estimare virtutem, nemo illi
magis esse devotus, quam qui boni viri famam perdisset, ne
conscientiam perderet. Sen. Epis. 81.*

† τῷ μωλωτι.

very confident, that no other Sense of Christ's bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, can be equally clear, consistent, and satisfactory to a thinking mind ; for the following reasons.

I. It best explains and confirms the doctrine of the divine placability: forasmuch as the behaviour of our Lord upon the cross, and under his sufferings, was such, as could compassionate the cruel hands that put him to death, and could supplicate pardoning mercy on his murderers. A degree of benevolence so meritorious, that the father has amply rewarded, by giving him *a name above every name*.—Thus did Jesus prove, that he came not into the world, to condemn the world, but that through him it might have the doctrine of pardon, and the demonstration of life. Certain it is, that in this greatness of his behaviour, his superior merit appears most conspicuous ; and one cannot view, without astonishment, his unexampled benevolence and compassion.

That the deity should approve and reward with supreme honours, the pleadings he
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offered : of pardoning mercy, to the penitent, who embrued their hands in his blood ; is, to us, an appeasing sense of his *bearing the sins of men in his own body on the tree* : since when we advert to the evidence given of his divine character and mission, and the unparalleled usefulness of his life, we are necessarily led to own, those pleadings of pardon, were such an instance in proof of the divine placability as had never been exhibited to the view of mankind ; no truth is more obvious, in a religious attention to his deportment. Let what can be said, of any of the most excellent of the human race, there is no one character of equal dignity, nor any that have made such an illustrious display of the placability of the Supreme.—Many have endured a great conflict of trying circumstance, and have been found unyielding and faithful to the death : but none have had such divine ability of benefitting their nation, and yet fell a sacrifice to the pride and prejudice of the priest and the prince.—If therefore, we can be ascertained of the divine placability towards men, who did resist the first degree of hea-

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venly light and the fullest display of divine love, upon their penitence ; there is not the least room to conclude the deity inexorable, disinclin'd or unwilling to pardon the penitent.—And if there be a superior lustre and glory residing upon the Gospel revelation, it must be confessed, to have its source in the adorable *grace* and *mercy* of the eternal father of lights, with whom is no variableness, nor the shadow of change.

II. The atonement, or propitiation which there is in the blood and death of Christ, is not made to God ; but to the mind, or conscience of the contrite sinner. This proposition is the language of all revelation, and emphatically of the gospel.—The favourable impression, is to be made by it on the human spirit ; or *God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to men their trespasses*. Thus the blood of Christ, who thro' the eternal spirit of truth and love, did offer himself without spot to God, does purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.—or the blood of Christ, is what cleanseth from all sin ; forasmuch as we can discern,

cern, that the divine mercy is unlimited, in its operation and influence, on sinners who are penitent. This is a consideration of vast use and importance, since there are no kinds of crime more atrocious or more full of malignity, than that of putting to death the Lord of life; and crucifying the well-beloved son of God. If therefore, the tenders of pardoning mercy were made to such miscreants, no one needs despair, who is truly humble, contrite and penitent. *God so loved the world!*

Nor is it at all reasonable to suppose, that a most impious perpetration of Christ's death, should have any tendency to incline or make God propitious, he could not approve the horrid scenery of his son's crucifixion! but must reckon his murderers enormously guilty: and would judicially visit all the obdurate and impenitent. This, we find, he did, in the signal destruction of that nation and polity.—Unreasonable, of consequence would it be, to imagine that an act of the most provoking and atrocious impiety should be a measure of *propitiating* the father of the universe,

verse, and rendring him more placable to mankind.

It can only have a natural tendency to reconcile the world to God, from the evidence thereby given of his free and rich grace, his pardoning mercy to the sincere penitent. Hence our Lord has said, *that all manner of sin against the son of man shall be forgiven—and that he gave his life a ransom for all, or his flesh for the life of the world.*—Without this event of the sufferings and death of Christ, we had never so clearly and fully known the boundless operation and saving efficacy of divine mercy upon contrite sinners.

We might farther illustrate the proposition, by observing, that it is unreasonable and unphilosophical to suppose the deity capable of any change: his perfections are eternally immutable. Nor could any possible act of obedience or homage, performed by any being, determine him more gracious and merciful, than he ever was to the penitent.—It is, undoubtedly, a weak and groundless presumption, to talk of expiating sin, or atoning for
 sin,

sin, by the blood of an innocent and holy person; so far from it, the *sacrifice* denotes, superlative guilt; and exposes the offerers to divine indignation, unless they fill with remorse, and become humble and contrite. But to say, that the death of Christ, did satisfy divine justice, is the very same thing as to say, that because mankind had depraved themselves and offended their maker, by many gross iniquities; they could atone, placate, and satisfy his justice by an excess of ingratitude, impiety and crime.—As little reason is there for any to imagine, that the death of Christ, did honour to a violated and broken law; when that very death was compassed by a most singular unexampled violation of that law.—On the contrary, by the death of Christ, we are clearly instructed in the free influence, and unlimited extent of divine mercy to penitents: in which sense only *the blood of Christ* has any atoning or propitiating virtue: and thus it does truly placate the conscience, and most efficaciously reconcile men to God.

It farther does this, as we are shewn, that such a kind of piety and virtue, resembling
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that which shone in our Lord's temper and behaviour, will be recompensed in all his followers, with an heavenly and everlasting reward.

III. The reason of Christ's sufferings and death, is manifestly that of his being *exemplary* in his patience and piety. To speak of it in this light, and not as an expiatory sacrifice, is, by no means, agreeable to the received and current systems of orthodoxy. A man is presently deemed a SOCINIAN, or some strange shocking sort of heretic. No one can be admitted to have any just notion of the mediation of Jesus, who does not make his sufferings and death, the *sine qua non*, to the operation of divine mercy. But nevertheless, whoever is afraid of delivering his own interpretation, which is in support of the original, unmerited and essential goodness of God, deserves not the name either of a man, or of a christian. And till it can be shewn, that the blood or death of Christ, did, or does *reconcile God to man*, or that this is any where the doctrine

^a Compare chap. iv. 1. Phil. ii. 5.—Heb. xii. 2.

doctrine of the New Testament instruction, one need be in no great pain about the censure or anathema of the most zealous and bigotted defender of the heresy, of *Christ's placating and appeasing God*. Assured we may be, that *St. Peter* reports his sufferings and death as *exemplary*. And that hereunto we were called, of suffering patiently, though wrongfully; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.

It is yet said,—if he died only as an *example*, what occasion was there for any more emphasis being laid on his death, than on the death of other martyrs for the truth?

I answer, much every way. For none of the sons of men, had ever such a stated illustrious presence of God with him; or such an ample divine testimony to his character and mission, neither had any of the most exalted character, ever been so amazingly beneficial to mankind—yet, under his ignominious sufferings and death, he discovered so great a command of his own spirit, as to shew a pitiful,

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tender, and compassionate regard for his ungrateful, unrelenting murderers.—This behaviour must be owned, altogether agreeable to *the judgment of God*; because the Deity did never so distinguish the merits and excellence of any human character, by the recompense of an universal dominion: for the man Christ Jesus is appointed LORD both of the dead and of the living! and God does judge the world by him in righteousness.

It hence appears, that the supreme being has thought fit to confer superior honours upon the man Christ Jesus, because of his superior worth and excellence. So that this apostle tells us,—*he is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him.* Another reason for this interpretation, is,

IV. Merit or excellence that is moral and rewardable, can, in the reason, and relation, or nature of things, be no other than personal: forasmuch as it is the result of personal application and labour; the actual use and improvement made of those given powers and
faculties,

faculties, means, talents, or advantages, vouchsafed unto, and which identifies any being whom God has created, or formed.—Merit and rewardability cannot therefore be ascribed to God, tho' we justly attribute to him an excellence or perfection of nature that is absolute and immutable.—But as this is not the result of labour, nor can be in him an acquisition, so it has no other resource but its own nature; nor any other motive, but its own rectitude. For which reason, *God cannot be tempted of any.*

But since we very justly attribute to the man Christ Jesus, merit and excellence that is moral and rewardable; we thereby confess him to be the object of divine approbation and complaisancy: and consider him too as necessarily and essentially distinct from that being who formed him by his immediate power in the womb of the virgin; and who so highly rewards him.—Farther, as we ascribe to him, merit or excellence that is moral and rewardable; we cannot reasonably believe or imagine, that this his merit, excellence, and rewardability, can possibly be ours; or can be

attributed or imputed to any other than to himself :—It is rather an exemplar or pattern of our imitation, even that of his *bearing our sins in his own body on the tree* ; i. e. if St. Peter be intelligible, or consistent in his reasoning. For he says, *this is grateful to God, that a man for conscience towards him endure grief, suffering wrongfully—and if when we do well and suffer for it, we take it patiently, this is acceptable with God and even hereunto were we called : because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps*—He then describes the nature and properties of the exemplar ; and one of those articles of temper and condition, in which we are to resemble him, is,—*his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree*—christians exposed to persecution would be obliged to bear similar marks and tokens of sin in their bodies, *as they endured grief for conscience towards God, suffering wrongfully* ; or *as they suffered for doing well, and took it patiently*—and by copying his example, *they died to sin, and did live unto righteousness* ; and so by his stripe were healed.

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There is therefore no kind of reason to suppose the merits and excellence of Christ, or his rewardability, capable of being transferred; or in any sense reckoned ours, farther than we follow his steps, and attain a resemblance of his divine temper and spirit: for, we might, with as much truth, conclude, that God's righteousness, holiness or perfection can, by imputation, become ours; because we are exhorted to be *righteous as he is righteous; holy as he is holy; and perfect as he is perfect.*

The opinion of imputation, *i. e.* of a transfer of merit and righteousness, seems to have had its early origin, from the dissatisfaction men have had in their own partial and remiss labours of virtue; and in the little care they have taken to copy this divine pattern of excellence. They have thus applied the merits and righteousness of Christ, though they have not cared to own it, to the purpose of appeasing and placating their own guilty consciences; under the specious pretext of propitiating divine justice, and vindicating the honour of his violated laws.

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V. To suppose that Jesus Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree, as a *substitute*; or that he sustained the *punishment* due to sin, is no way consistent with truth, reason or revelation.—Where no guilt could be imputed, there could be no demerit, nor any punishment.—And we are expressly assured,—*he had no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.*—It was therefore impossible he could suffer as a criminal, or sustain the punishment due to sin—a vicarious sacrifice he could not offer: nor could he, in the eye of truth and God, stand, or be put in the place of the sinner: for this would be to invert all order, and reverse every of the divine rectitudes.—

It was on account of, or by reason of the transgressions of men *he was wounded*; and *he was bruised by their iniquities*, or, *he bore our sins in his own body on the tree*; as thereon were the marks and impressions made of sin and impiety, which in no one character, however innocently suffering, was there ever such flagrant tokens of iniquity. And it is amazing, that mankind have not so understood, the
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representation ! in no other sense is it possible he could ever *bear the sins of men in his own body on the tree.*—And should we deviate from this construction, we must unavoidably arraign the wisdom, equity and righteousness of God, by supposing him capable of punishing the innocent, and placing the worthy in the very condition of the guilty, contrary to an ancient maxim of divine wisdom, *he that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just ; even they both are an abomination to the Lord.*

Nor will it consist with the declarations, or testimonies of God's pleasure in him, as being his *well-beloved Son* : unless we might suppose, that God could love and have complacency in him, under the imputation of a sinner : or as having the weight of guilt upon him. The ideas are crude ; nay, they are barbarously wild and extravagant.

It verily is impossible there could be merit or excellence, in a man's voluntarily taking the place and character of a sinner ; *i. e.* in either sustaining his guilt, or his punishment.—The nature, truth, and reason of things, are
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in bar of such masquerade character; since it is absolutely absurd and impracticable to make a moral transfer, either of personal merit or of demerit.—Fancy and imagination may devise a thousand appearances, but truth, reason and nature, are not consenting to the shocking delusion. For should a good man consent to die in the stead of a capital criminal, he would neither be chargeable with his guilt nor his punishment, neither would the criminal thereby be less guilty.

The temptation some have been under, to form conceptions of the sufferings and death of Christ, as expiatory, has arisen; principally, from another opinion, altogether as incapable of defence; and that is, the imputation of sin, or derivation of guilt to all mankind from an original lapse. Which if true, would countenance the scheme of imputation both of sin and righteousness, as applicable to Christ.—but neither the one, nor the other, does any great honour to the christian system, to which they are strangely supposed to appertain.

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There are, it must be owned after all, many sacrificial allusions made by the Apostles, who were *Jews*, when speaking of the death of Christ: but when we read them in consistence, they are found to teach no such doctrine, as that of, *Christ being the sinner's substitute*.—On the contrary, the constant representation of the design, and salutary efficacy of his sufferings and death, is constantly moral. And was I not determined to confine myself to this passage in *St. Peter's Epistle*, I could largely shew, that this is the uniform language of the New Testament.—Peter expressly says, *he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripe we were healed*.—To enter cordially into the spirit of his example, will certainly determine any one *dead to sin; and alive to righteousness*.—The very nature of an imitation will suppose this; because such a command of temper and spirit, can only be the result of an advanced, established piety and virtue.

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By whose stripe, or stroke, we are healed, just as we learn by it, to die to sin, and live unto righteousness ; i. e. the moral, practical effect, and influence, is, what is healing and salutary, or restorative. Hence, the Apostle writing to strangers scattered abroad, by reason of a persecution raised against the professors of christianity, adds, for ye were as sheep going astray ; but are now returned to the shepherd and bishop of your souls. Whether Jews or Gentiles, they, probably, had been shook in their profession ; and had timidly wandered into devious and dangerous paths. But when the Apostle did write, they were, in some measure, recovered and restored to a firmness and stability.—Or, perhaps, they had refused subjection to infidel magistrates and masters, and thought themselves freed from those obligations, in virtue of their christian profession. I should rather conclude this to be his meaning, because he had before exhorted to the social duties, and here urgeth the exhortation, from the patient and meek example of Christ——and he immediately after this, re-assumes the obligation to
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social duties, in those other branches, *viz.* of *wives* and *husbands*.—And verily, they might truly be said to have been *as sheep going astray*, who ventured upon a violation of these laws of relation ; and when recovered to social rectitude, they might also be said, *to be returned unto the shepherd and bishop of their souls.*

VI. A farther reason for the given interpretation, is, that any other sense of Christ's bearing our sins, than the rational, practical, and moral one, must be fanciful and fallacious, and have a very dangerous and deadly tendency. If, *e. g.* men should once imagine, that the death of Christ was *appeasing* and *propitiating* to the deity ; their apprehensions of God will be base and dishonourable, and their ideas of moral rectitude, vague, confused, and unmeaning.—For how can we suppose, both innocent and meritorious blood, spilt by wicked hands, an acceptable sacrifice, to a being, *of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity* ? This would be to affix very discordant ideas to the divine measures of government and providence ; it

would even lead us to conclude him pleased, with a most impious, wanton, and cruel procedure.—

All that could be pleasing or agreeable to God, in the sufferings and death of Jesus, was, his patient, pious and meek, his benevolent and compassionate behaviour, under the shocking insult, indignity and torture ! and this deportment well deserves both our admiration and imitation.

But to fancy, with some, that Jesus Christ, by this act of obedience, has done all that for us, which satisfied every of the demands of the law, and fulfilled the whole moral obligation ; would be an extreme of frenzy and disturbed reverie ! for if this could be allowed, on the part of God's acceptance of us, there would then be no *mercy* ; and on our parts, in a reliance on such satisfaction, we should be naturally led to licentiousness, and a cold indifference, as to personal rectitude. *Faith*, rather *credulity*, will here become the sole pillar of our trust
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and dependence ; and that mere reliance on a satisfaction made to divine justice, and to the demand of a violated law, will be an *opiate* that stupifies, and indisposes for all the labours of virtue, and for any of the attainments of a rational piety.

With this subterfuge, a man may quietly enough lye with his neighbour's wife ; cheat, cozen, or impose on the confidence of his correspondent, indulge to any reigning appetite or passion ; and yet expect to partake of all the heavenly joys ! he may, notwithstanding he neither denies ungodliness nor worldly lusts, and has little acquaintance with sobriety, righteousness or godliness ; and though he has no kind of fervency or zeal for good works.—The *Solifidian*,ⁱ however, is certainly in the right way to happiness, if Jesus Christ *has done all for him* ; for he is then to be justified, not by his own personal rectitude, but by the merit alone of Christ's obedience.

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ⁱ Consult *Sandeman* and *Pyke's Letters* ; attend to *Whitefield, Romain, Ryley, &c. &c. &c.*

I own myself unable to vindicate St. Peter, in exhorting to the social duties, and insisting on moral and divine obligations, if Jesus Christ in the above sense, *bore our sins in his own body on the tree*; even so as to satisfy all the demands of the law, and fulfil all moral obligation for us.—Our attentions to the social duties, are then become *superfluous*: and even our Lord's teachings are silly.

VII. Every man, who is conscious of a disposition, not only to bear patiently ill-usage, but to desire the welfare of his most unreasonable and malicious enemies, who are requiting him evil for his good; may consider himself as improving, to the best purpose, upon the perfect example of his Lord: nor is there an higher or more divine attainment, of which the human mind is capable.—In this it was that Jesus Christ did so eminently appear to be, *the brightness of his father's glory, and the express character of his person!* for though the supreme being is impassible, and incapable of pain or suffering, yet he is kind and good to the un-
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thankful and to the evil. And as far as we, under ill-usage and provocations, do resemble his Son, in patience, pity and benevolence, we shall be the approved children of the most high. *For even hereunto were we called : because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps : who when he was reviled, he reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatned not ; but committed, or delivered up to him that judgeth righteously.— This is grateful, or acceptable with God.*

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